

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 120467
ORIGIN PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-07 OES-07 FEAE-00
DODE-00 ERDA-07 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 PA-02
PRS-01 USIE-00 NEA-10 H-02 /113 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 120467

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:ENRG, MNUC, PARM, TECH

SUBJECT: NEWSPAPER ARTICLE RE SHIPMENT OF URANIUM TO INDIA

FOR GELB FROM BARTHOLOMEW

FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED FRONT PAGE WASHINGTON POST
WEDNESDAY, MAY 25.

CARTER WILLING TO SHIP INDIA URANIUM FUEL BY DON
OBERDORFER

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS DECIDED TO SUPPLY INDIA WITH
SEVERAL MONTHS WORTH OF URANIUM FUEL FOR ITS BIG ATOMIC
POWER REACTOR ON CONDITION THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES OPEN
BORAD TALKS ON THEIR FUTURE NUCLEAR RELATIONS.

INFORMED SOURCES SAID THE US DECISION HAS BEEN BROACHED
INFORMALLY TO NEW DELHI AND WILL BE OFFICIALLY PROPOSED
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SOON BY THE ARRIVING US AMBASSADOR ROBERT GOHEEN.

A LARGE SHIPMENT OF LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM TO FUEL THE US-
MANUFACTURED POWER REACTOR AT TARAPUR HAS BEEN HELD UP FOR
NEARLY A YEAR BECAUSE OF CONCERN ABOUT INDIA'S ATOMIC POLI-
CIES. THE DECISION TO PERMIT AN INTERIM SHIPMENT WAS
DESCRIBED AS AN EFFORT TO HEAD OFF A POWER SHUTDOWN WHILE

ENCOURAGING THE NEW INDIA GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT ANTI-EXPLOSION POLICIES.

IN THE FIRST INTIMATION OF THE US DECISION, JOSEPH S. NYE JR., THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S SENIOR NUCLEAR EXPERT, TOLD A SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO ENTER BROAD TALKS WITH INDIA "ON A WIDE VARIETY OF OBJECTIVES IN THE NONPROLIFERATION FIELD." HE SAID THE DECISION ON THE TARAPUR FUEL WOULD BE PLACED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BROADER TALKS.

SOME STATEMENTS BY PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI, WHO ASSUMED OFFICE IN LATE MARCH AFTER AN ELECTION UPSET OVER INDIRA GANDHI, HAVE BEEN "VERY ENCOURAGING" FROM THE US VIEWPOINT, NYE SAID.

INDIA, WHICH BECAME THE SIXTH NATION WITH AN EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY AFTER AN UNDERGROUND BLAST IN MAY, 1974, IS OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE IN THE DRIVE TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF ATOMIC WEAPONS.

CONTINUED INDIAN BLASTS WOULD SPUR THE DEMAND OF NEIGHBORING PAKISTAN AND OTHER THIRD WORLD NATIONS FOR THEIR OWN A-BOMB CAPABILITY. HOWEVER, AN INDIAN DECISION TO FOREGO FUTURE BLASTS WOULD IMPROVE THE CHANCES OF KEEPING THE BOMB IN CHECK.

DESAI HAS TAKEN NO DEFINITIVE POSITION ABOUT "PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS," WHICH IS WHAT INDIA CALLS ITS 1974 UNCLASSIFIED

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BLAST. THE DAY HE TOOK OFFICE, DESAI SAID HE DID NOT KNOW IF SUCH EXPLOSIONS ARE NECESSARY, AND IF THEY ARE NOT, "IT SHOULD NEVER BE DONE."

IN A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 16, HE SAID THAT IF A PEACEFUL EXPLOSION IS NECESSARY "WE WILL CERTAINLY DO IT," BUT WOULD ANNOUNCE IT AND INVITE FOREIGN AND INDIAN OBSERVERS.

AS WAS THE CASE WITH HIS PREDECESSOR, DESAI RENOUNCED "ATOMIC WEAPONS" AS A MATTER OF INDIAN POLICY. ON MAY 16, DESAI SEEMED TO GO FURTHER THAT PREVIOUS STATEMENTS, SAYING THAT "ATOMIC WEAPONS ARE NO GOOD FOR DEFENSE AT ALL... THEY CAN'T EVER WIN A WAR." HE ADDED THAT "IF WE REMAIN FIRM ABOUT IT (ATOMIC) POLICY, WE CAN HELP IN THE PROCESS OF REMOVING NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM THE WORLD, AND THAT IS THE TASK WE ARE ENGAGED IN."

DESAI REVEALED LAST MONTH THAT THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT HAS INFORMED THE UNITED STATES OF THE "ADVERSE EFFECT" THAT A

FURTHER DELAY IN THE ATOMIC FUEL SHIPMENT COULD HAVE ON
INDIA'S POWER SUPPLY.

IF THERE IS A DELAY BEYOND MAY, THE OPERATION OF THE
TARAPUR STATION--WHICH PROVIDES LIGHT AND POWER FOR
MUCH OF THE BOMBAY REGION--COULD BE AFFECTED BY MID-1978,
ACCORDING TO DESAI. US OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THAT THE
FABRICATION PLANT THAT MANUFACTURES FUEL RODS FOR
TARAPUR IS RUNNING OUT OF ITS URANIUM MATERIAL.

THE TARAPUR SHIPMENT WOULD MEET THE MINIMUM CRITERIA
FOR APPROVAL UNDER PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEW NUCLEAR EXPORT
POLICY, SINCE INDIA HAS AGREED THAT NONE OF THIS FUEL
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HOWEVER, THE CARTER POLICY ALSO CALLS FOR THE UPGRADING
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OF EXISTING ATOMIC AGREEMENTS TO REQUIRE INTERNATIONAL
SAFEGUARDS ON ALL NUCLEAR MATERIALS AND FACILITIES IN
A COUNTRY RECEIVING US EXPORTS. THIS IS EXPECTED TO BE
AMONG THE TOPICS FOR THE FORTHCOMING US-INDIAN ATOMIC
NEGOTIATIONS.

MEANWHILE, CARTER'S ANTIPROLIFERATION CAMPAIGN RECEIVED
A BOOST AS THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDED BY VOICE VOTE THAT THE HOUSE HALT
CONSTRUCTION OF THE CLINCH RIVER, TENN., POWER PLANT,
FUELED BY PLUTONIUM, WHICH CAN BE USED TO MAKE ATOMIC
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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

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APPROVED BY NEA/INS:DKUX

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BOMBAY IMMEDIATE

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FOL RPT STATE 120467 ACTION LONDON 25 MAY 77 QUOTE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, URANIUM, NUCLEAR FUELS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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SAS ID: 2370098
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEWSPAPER ARTICLE RE SHIPMENT OF URANIUM TO INDIA FOR GELB FROM BARTHOLOMEW FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED FRONT PAGE WASHINGTON P
TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, PARM, TECH, US, IN
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Type: TE
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